

No instance of the gift of tongues has been demonstrated from the apostolic age unto modern times. In addition, the Church as a whole has always felt that the gift of tongues ceased with the apostles. Chrysostom (345-407) and Augustine (354-430) give clear statements that the gift of tongues ceased long before their time. It is certain that the gift of tongues did cease by the end of the apostolic age. This fact is recognized by many who assume that this gift is present today. An attempt is made to solve this problem by admitting that the gift ceased but claiming that it is given again today. The fact is that this gift did cease. If the gift of tongues had continued normally in the Church as it was given in the beginning, then there would be no question or issue raised regarding its occurrence today. The issue is raised because it did in fact cease. Since there is no statement in Scripture that tongues will not cease, the Church has never felt any difficulty recognizing this fact until the new view arose in some circles that they are present today. The fact that they did not exist for most of church history shows that, during most of the time in which the Church has existed, not all gifts were given.

One incontrovertible fact solves the basic question, "Are some gifts temporary?" That fact is that the gift of New Testament apostle has ceased. An apostle must have seen the resurrected Lord, according to 1 Corinthians 9:1-2. Paul is the last one who qualified (1 Corinthians 15:8) and was the last apostle. Other passages, as we have previously discussed, also support this. An apostle had to be able to perform signs, miracles, and wonders, according to 2 Corinthians 12:12. The examples given in the New Testament have not been duplicated since. Paul says that such signs confirmed his evangelistic ministry as apostle to the Gentiles. The overwhelming consensus of the Church since earliest times is that apostles were only in the beginning Church, thereby admitting that at least this one gift was temporary. No one has realistically claimed to be an apostle in the full sense of the New Testament apostle (the Twelve and Paul). Therefore it is clear that one gift was temporary. This establishes the fact that all gifts are not continually given to the Church-- that some gifts are in fact temporary. And if one gift is temporary, others may be also.

Ephesians 2:20 declares that apostles and prophets are the foundation for the universal Church. . . .

Second Corinthians 12:12 reveals that the apostles performed miraculous signs. These works were signs and were proof of apostleship. We would expect, therefore, that miraculous sign-works, since they were evidence of apostleship, were also a characteristic of apostleship. It is unlikely that such works extended to any great extent outside the apostolic circle. . . . The miraculous